

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03

/047 W

-----031933Z 114293 /46

O R 031815Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2699

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 0970

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, BB

SUBJECT: MILITARY FACILITY NEGOTIATIONS

REF STATE 097307 (NOTAL)

1. BY APPOINTMENT, I CALLED THIS MORNING (MAY 3) ON A.W. SYMMONDS, PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS; DELIVERED TO HIM THE EMBASSY REPLY TO THE MINISTRY'S NOTE OF APRIL 27, PROPOSING A VISIT BY SENIOR GOB OFFICIALS TO THE NAVAL FACILITY; AND INFORMED HIM ORALLY THAT AN EXCEPTION FROM NATIONAL SECURITY DISCLOSURE POLICY HAD BEEN REQUESTED FOR A CLASSIFIED BRIEFING AND ACCESS TO SECURE AREAS FOR VERY SENIOR GOB OFFICIALS.

2. SYMMONDS EXPRESSED NO DISSATISFACTION WITH THE EMBASSY'S REPLY AND SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE UNCLASSIFIED BRIEFING TO TAKE PLACE MAY 5. (I HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE NAVAL FACILITY, WHO TOLD ME THAT ANY DAY THIS WEEK WOULD BE AGREEABLE TO HIM.) SYMMONDS THEN INQUIRED
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WHETHER THE USG HAD DRAWN UP A PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS DUE TO BEGIN MAY 12. I REMINDED HIM THAT, IN THE EMBASSY'S NOTE OF APRIL 26, INFORMING THE MINISTRY OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE US NEGOTIATING TEAM, THE GOB HAD BEEN ASKED WHETHER IT WISHED TO PROPOSE AN AGENDA OR SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS.

3. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT SYMMONDS HAD OVERLOOKED THIS PART OF THE NOTE BUT, RATHER THAN ADMIT TO HAVING BEEN SO CARELESS, HE REPLIED TO MY REJOINDER THAT THE GOB DID NOT EVEN KNOW WHAT IT WAS THE USG WANTED TO NEGOTIATE -- WHETHER A NEW AGREEMENT, THE TERMS UNDER WHICH THE BASE WOULD BE CLOSED OUT, OR SOMETHING ELSE. "JUST WHAT IS THE BASIC US POSITION?" HE ASKED. "TO SUME IT UP IN A FEW WORDS" I ANSWERED, "THE BASIC POSITION IS THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE THE BASE BUT DO NOT REGARD ITS CONTINUED OPERATION AS ESSENTIAL TO US SECURITY AND ARE PREPARED TO CLOSE IT IF NECESSARY." THIS STATEMENT CLEARLY CAME AS A SHOCK TO SYMMONDS. REVERTING TO A FAMILIAR THEME, HE REMARKED THAT BARBADOS INCURRED CERTAIN RISKS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CENSURE, BY ALLOWING THE BASE TO OPERATE HERE. I REPLIED THAT I WAS AWARE THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME CRITICISM OF THE BASE'S PRESENCE BUT THAT, INSOFAR AS I KNEW, NONE OF IT HAD COME FROM WHAT COULD BE DESCRIBED AS NEUTRAL SOURCES, AND I POINTED OUT THAT THE BASE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BARBADIAN ECONOMY AND WAS THE CHIEF EMPLOYER IN THE PARIS OF ST. LUCY.

4. AS I WAS ABOUT TO TAKE MY LEAVE OF HIM, SYMMONDS SAID THAT THE MINISTRY WOULD WITHIN THE NEXT "COUPLE OF DAYS" SEND THE EMBASSY A NOTE PROPOSING AN AGENDA FOR THE FIRST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS. AMONG THE SUBJECTS THAT CLEARLY SHOULD BE DISCUSSED, HE ADDED, WAS THAT OF "RETROACTIVE COMPENSATION" AND, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUCH DISCUSSION, THE GOB WOULD REQUIRE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE MINISTRY'S NOTE OF MARCH 30. I AGAIN TOLD HIM, AS I HAD UPON RECEIPT OF STATE 075513, THAT IT WOULD TAKE SOME TIME TO PROVIDE ANY OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTED AND THAT MUCH OF IT WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE RETRIEVABLE. SYMMONDS ALSO SAID THE MINISTRY'S NOTE WOULD LIST THE MEMBERS OF THE BARBADOS NEGOTIATING TEAM.

SIMMS

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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